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## R. & D. Data Curbs Hurt More Than Russia

To the Editor:

In a speech to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Adm. Bobby R. Inman, Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, asked for voluntary measures to prevent the loss of sensitive military technology to the Soviet Union. Otherwise, he said, the scientists will face "legal restraints" (news story Jan. 8).

There seems no question that the Soviets have benefited from Western technology, and particularly from U.S. technology because of our long tradition of open publication of unclassified research and development. However, measures that prevent Soviet access to unclassified literature also prevent hundreds of thousands of engineers, scientists and undergraduate and graduate students in the U.S., in allied nations and in developing nations from having access to that same material.

It used to be that U.S. research and development was so far ahead of the rest of the world that we could only be pleased when our technology was propagated or purchased. But for almost 15 years, R. & D. as a percentage of gross national product has been dropping — from 2.9 percent of G.N.P. in 1967 to about 2 percent now. If the 2.9

percent had been maintained, over \$100 billion more R. & D. would have been performed in that period.

Think of what the \$100 billion could have done to maintain vitality in the industrial and educational system. Without it, we've experienced a reversal in our balance of trade, from positive to negative. Our engineering and science schools have suffered (only 5.8 percent of our 1980 college graduates were engineers, compared with 35 percent in the U.S.S.R., 37 percent in West Germany and 21 percent in Japan).

And many economists believe the size of the G.N.P. itself, and therefore the ability of the nation to support desperately needed social programs, has diminished because it hasn't been nurtured by the new enterprises and the new products that come from R. & D.

Unfortunately, many Americans fail to realize that the country's wealth was built on R. & D. Now it needs to be rebuilt. Any new policy of restricting the flow of unclassified literature should be thought through very carefully lest it hurt not only the Soviets but all society. JAMES J. HARFORD  
Executive Secretary, American Institute  
of Aeronautics and Astronautics  
New York, Jan. 26, 1982